



Council grants CARD

■ ARD research clinic receives funding, finally

By BRENT SHRUM
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The Libby City Council on Monday approved a \$250,000 grant for the Center for Asbestos-Related Disease to help fund the establishment of an asbestos research center.

The council's decision came a week after a vote to discontinue using the Libby Area Development Co. to review proposals and make recommendations concerning the use of the city's economic development fund. The LADC had been established after the city received an \$8 million federal economic development grant in the fall of 2000.

The research center proposal had been rejected by the LADC after the CARD board was directed to rework the proposal as a loan but persisted in seeking a grant. A modified proposal, which included a provision for an annual \$5,000 medical scholarship as a form of payback, was never given a formal hearing by the LADC.

At Monday's meeting the city council approved the request as a grant but left open the issue of payback. Councilman Doug Roll, who made the motion to approve the grant, said there has been some discussion concerning having the \$5,000 paid back to the city fund each year rather than handed out as a scholarship to a student pursuing a medical education.

"It's \$5,000 either way," he said.

The council agreed to approve the grant and decide the payback issue at a later time.

"We've had that discussion with our board, and we're perfectly satisfied with leaving that to the discretion of the city council," said CARD representative LeRoy Thom.

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proposals is scheduled for a special meeting on Monday, Nov. 15.

The chamber is seeking \$145,000 for a variety of improvements at its visitor center. The proposal includes \$50,000 for a reader board designed to match the "Kootenai River Country" gateway signs being planned for highway entrances to the county, \$41,000 to pave the parking lot, \$16,000 for office equipment, \$25,000 for advertising and \$13,000 for a contingency fund.

The pool committee is asking for \$15,000 to fund a design

study to allow the committee to place the question of whether or not to fund construction on a spring ballot. The cost of building a pool is projected at around \$1.5 million, said project spokesman Tom Horelick.

A request from the Lincoln County Port Authority for the money remaining in the city's account was not on Monday's agenda because the port authority is still working with City Attorney Scott Spencer on the terms of the proposal, said Mayor Tony Berget.

Prior to the approval of the CARD proposal, around \$800,000 remained in the city's

account and not allocated toward any project. About \$4 million more is due to return to the fund eventually through loans and certificates of deposit used to secure loans.

The port authority had initially planned to ask the city for the entire amount remaining in the account and unallocated along with all the money due to return to the account except for a \$1 million loan to the city itself. The funds would be used for development at the former Stimson mill site, which was handed over to the port authority at the end of 2003.

The CARD plans to use the funds to establish a database, website, library and tissue bank to facilitate research into asbestos-related disease. The money represents about a third of that needed to complete the project but would show community support and help the CARD in its quest for additional funding, according to board president Mike Giesey.

The model for the center, which was developed during two conferences held in Libby last year and funded by a \$26,000 grant approved by the LADC and the city council, calls for the CARD to continue providing health care to patients while contracting with researchers around the country or around the world. Proposals for research projects would be reviewed by a panel made up of participants in the conferences.

Also at Monday's meeting, the council formally received funding proposals from the Libby Area Chamber of Commerce and the committee working on a proposal to build a public swimming pool in Libby. A decision on the

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